

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 2311**

---

**Introduced by Assembly Member Brown**

February 18, 2016

---

An act to add Sections 8588.20, 8598.5, and 8635.5 to the Government Code, relating to emergency services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2311, as introduced, Brown. Emergency services: sign language interpreters.

Existing law establishes the Office of Emergency Services within the office of the Governor and under the supervision of the Director of Emergency Services and makes the office responsible for the state's emergency and disaster response services for natural, technological, or manmade disasters and emergencies. Existing law requires every state agency and officer to cooperate with the secretary in rendering all possible assistance in carrying out the provisions of the act.

This bill would require the office to provide or contract for a disaster response sign language interpreter certification program to train individuals on the use of American Sign Language to effectively communicate public safety information. The bill would additionally require every state agency and every local agency to utilize a sign language interpreter who has completed that certification program to provide interpretation services at every media or public briefing where actionable information will be disseminated before, during, or after a state of war emergency, state of emergency, or local emergency. By increasing the duties of local officials, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.  
State-mandated local program: yes.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1     SECTION 1. Section 8588.20 is added to the Government  
2     Code, immediately following Section 8588.15, to read:

3     8588.20. The office shall provide, or contract for, a disaster  
4     response sign language interpreter certification program, which  
5     shall train persons on the use of American Sign Language to  
6     effectively communicate public safety information.

7     SEC. 2. Section 8598.5 is added to the Government Code, to  
8     read:

9     8598.5. Every state agency shall utilize a sign language  
10    interpreter who has completed the disaster response sign language  
11    interpreter certification program as specified in Section 8588.20,  
12    to provide interpretation services at every media or public briefing  
13    where actionable information will be disseminated before, during,  
14    or after a state of emergency, state of war emergency, or local  
15    emergency.

16    SEC. 3. Section 8635.5 is added to the Government Code, to  
17    read:

18    8635.5. The governing body of a local agency shall utilize a  
19    sign language interpreter who has completed the disaster response  
20    sign language interpreter certification program as specified in  
21    Section 8588.20, to provide interpretation services at every media  
22    or public briefing where actionable information will be  
23    disseminated before, during, or after a state of emergency, state  
24    of war emergency, or local emergency.

25    SEC. 4. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that  
26    this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to  
27    local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made

- 1 pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division
- 2 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

O